

REMARKS

Claim 12 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As the Examiner will note, claim 12 has been amended to qualify the language of claim 12 to correspond to the situation where N is an integer > 1 . Thus it is believed that claim 12, as presently amended, eliminates the Examiner's rejection of claim 12 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection of claim 12 is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 3, 5, 7 and 11 are rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,721,435 (Zanders). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention is directed to a flexible sheet deposition system for depositing sheets on a selected one of multiple supports facing a selected one of multiple sheet deposition locations. Drive means and control means are provided so that each support can be moved up and down so as to face each sheet deposition location where the distance between adjacent supports can be adjusted. Advantageously, the flexible sheet deposition system of the present invention is provided with a plurality of supports which are detachable with respect to the position of the support along the guide member on which it is suspended. One of the most important features of the present invention, when it is considered in the light of the Zanders patent, is that each support can be detached from the guide member regardless of its position on the guide member.

In the final rejection, the Examiner has taken the position that the apparatus disclosed in Zanders is inherently put together during its initial assembly and inherently can be taken apart, for example, for maintenance and/or repair. In this manner, the Examiner attempts to obviate the feature of the present invention wherein the supports 10 to 17 as shown in Fig. 1 of the present application are manually detachable on the guide members. The Examiner, on page 4 of the Office Action letter, also apparently feels that the "detachable" feature of the present invention is

only recited in claim 11 in a functional way rather than a structural way and, accordingly, it is not given patentable consideration. Although the Applicants disagree with the Examiner's interpretation of the claims, it will be noted that claim 11 has been further amended to recite that the supports are detachably engaged with the plurality of points of suspension disposed on the guide members. Thus, it is believed that claim 11 clearly recites the structural interrelationship between the detachable support members 10 to 17 and the plurality of points of suspension on the guide members, thereby clearly distinguishing the present invention from the teachings of Zanders.

In addition, there is no suggestion in Zanders that the supports 13 can be detached from the guide members 9 and 11 by pulling off or breaking the rods 14 on which the supports 13 rest to release such supports 13 from the Zanders device. Thus, in applying the teachings of Zanders it is necessary to, in effect, destroy and reconstruct the apparatus in Zanders to accommodate the "detachable" feature of the present application which is clearly recited in claim 11 of the present application. Thus, in applying the teachings of Zanders to the present invention, the Examiner must completely reconstruct the teachings of this reference in view of the Applicants' own disclosure.

Claim 8 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zanders and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,046,641 to Gray. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Since claim 8 is dependent indirectly from claim 11, and since Gray does not cure the deficiencies of Zanders, it is believed that for the same reasons as argued hereinabove, it is believed that claim 8 is also patentably distinguishable over Zanders in combination with Gray.

In amending the claims, it will be noted by the Examiner that none of the amendments made to the claims raise new issues with respect to the present application since all of the issues which the Applicants have attempted to resolve in connection with the preparation of the proposed Amendment have been previously discussed and considered by the Examiner and thus it is believed that the present proposed Amendment should be entered as placing the present

application into condition for allowance. Since claim 4 has been indicated by the Examiner as containing allowable subject matter, and since claims 11 and 12 have been amended in an attempt to comply with the Examiner's objections and rejections with respect thereto, it is now believed the present application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejections and/or objections and allowance of all of the claims of the present application are respectfully requested. Since the Applicants' attorney believes that the claims of the present application now define allowable subject matter over the prior art, in the event that the Examiner finds some problems with respect to the claims of the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the Applicants' attorney so that any outstanding issues may be discussed by way of an interview with the Examiner. Furthermore, in the event that, for some reason, the proposed Amendment does not place the present application into condition for allowance, entry thereof is respectfully requested as placing the present application in better condition for appeal.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Joseph A. Kolasch Reg. No. 22,463 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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